

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12 EUR-12
OIC-02 OES-09 NSF-02 INT-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-20 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-01 TRSE-00
XMB-04 OPIC-06 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-07 CEA-01
HA-05 SMS-01 AGRE-00 HUD-02 HEW-06 /207 W
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 20002

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECA, CCON, TECH

SUBJ: AFRICAN REGIONAL MEETING OF THE UN CONFERENCE ON

- SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT: KEYNOTE BY
- ADEDEJI

REF: CAIRO 19919

1. FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTED PORTIONS OF POSSIBLE SPECIAL
INTEREST OF KEYNOTE STATEMENT DELIVERED BY ECA EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY ADEDEJI. BEGIN QUOTE:

2. TECHNOLOGY IS, AT FIRST SIGHT, MERELY AN ESSENTIAL
INPUT TO PRODUCTION, AND IS BOUGHT AND SOLD ON THE WORLD
MARKET AS A COMMODITY IN FORMS SUCH AS: (A) CAPITAL GOODS
AND SERVICES AND PRODUCTIVE SYSTEMS; (B) HUMAN LABOUR,
USUALLY SKILLED, INCLUDING HIGHLY SPECIALIZED MANPOWER AND
MANAGEMENT; AND, (C) INFORMATION, OF A TECHNICAL NATURE,
SUCH AS BLUEPRINTS AND OPERATING MANUALS SOME OF WHICH IS
FREELY AVAILABLE AND SOME OF WHICH IS SUBJECT TO PROPRI-
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ETARY RIGHTS AND RESTRICTIONS. THE COUNTRIES OF THE
AFRICAN REGION ARE DEFICIENT IN ALL THE FORMS IN WHICH
TECHNOLOGY IS PROVIDED. THEY ACCORDINGLY HAVE TO IMPORT
TECHNOLOGY ON A LARGE SCALE FROM THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.
STUDIES ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT (R & D) IN THE WORLD HAVE SHOWED THAT THE THIRD
WORLD CONSTITUTES WHAT MIGHT BE CALLED AN R & D DESERT.

ITS SHARE OF WORLD R & D HAS CHANGED ONLY FROM 2 PER CENT IN THE 1960'S TO 2.3 PER CENT IN THE 1970'S. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE U.S.A., U.S.S.R., THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, FRANCE, U.K. AND JAPAN TOGETHER SPEND MORE THAN 85 PER CENT OF WORLD EXPENDITURE ON R & D, AND HAVE MORE THAN 70 PER CENT OF R & D MANPOWER. THE SIX NATIONS TOGETHER SPEND ON AGRICULTURAL R & D ALONE MORE THAN THE REST OF THE WORLD SPENDS ON ALL TYPES OF R & D. THE TRENDS ALSO INDICATE THAT THE GAP IS WIDENING INSTEAD OF NARROWING.

3. SINCE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ARE EFFECTIVE AND INDISPENSABLE TOOLS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, QUESTIONS SUCH AS THESE RAISE THE WHOLE ISSUE OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY. ARE AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO CONTINUE WITH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES WHOSE RESULTS CONTINUE TO PERPETUATE THE COLONIAL STRUCTURE OF THEIR ECONOMIES AND THUS AGGRAVATE THEIR ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE? HAS THE TIME NOT BEEN LONG DUE WHEN AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS SHOULD SEEK ALTERNATIVE PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT WHICH WILL MAKE THEIR COUNTRIES LESS ECONOMICALLY DEPENDENT? SUCH A NEW STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE, AS ITS PRIMARY OBJECTIVE, THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION IN AFRICA WITHIN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME. FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AN INCREASING MEASURE OF SELF-RELIANCE, WHETHER AT NATIONAL OR AT REGIONAL LEVEL, WILL BE MERE POLITICAL SHIBBOLETHS

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UNLESS AND UNTIL AFRICA HAS INTERNALIZED THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY INTO ITS SOCIETY, UNTIL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY HAS ACHIEVED A ROOT-TAKING PROCESS

4. FIRST WITH REGARD TO SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGICAL INVENTION, THE STRUCTURE OF MOST AFRICAN ECONOMIES PREVENTS THESE CHALLENGES FROM BEING EXPRESSED AS EFFECTIVE DEMANDS. THE PLURAL CHARACTER OF MOST ECONOMIES, REFLECTING NOT MERELY THE DIVISION INTO AND IMBALANCE BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL, MODERN AND TRADITIONAL, BUT ALSO THE PRESENCE OF SO MANY ENCLAVES AND SEMI-ENCLAVES (MANUFACTURING, MINING, SOME FORMS OF EXPORT CROP PRODUCTION, IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF EDUCATION, TRANSPORTATION, TARIFF STRUCTURES AND BUSINESS INCENTIVE SYSTEMS, TECHNOLOGY, ETC.) TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE PATTERN OF INCOME DISTRIBUTION AND OF CONSUMPTION AND THE RELATIVE ABSENCE OF A CAPITAL GOODS AND SERVICES INDUSTRY, MEAN THAT UNTIL SOME MAJOR EFFORT AT RESTRUCTURING IS UNDERTAKEN THERE WILL BE VERY LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABSORBING IMPORTED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND WORSE STILL FOR THEIR LOCAL DEVELOPMENT.

5. OUR NEXT POINT IS TRANSFER AND HERE I SHOULD LIKE TO BRING OUT CLEARLY THAT WE IN THE SECRETARIAT OF ECA ARE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE LIKELY EFFECTS OF OPENING THE AFRICA REGION WIDELY TO IMPORTED TECHNOLOGY. WE HAVE DEFINED TECHNOLOGICAL DEPENDENCE AS LACK OF CAPABILITIES (I) IN DEFINING DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION NEEDS IN TECHNOLOGICAL TERMS; (II) IN IDENTIFYING ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF TECHNOLOGY FOR SATISFYING THOSE NEEDS; (III) IN IDENTIFYING COMPETITIVE SOURCES OF PROCUREMENT; (IV) IN NEGOTIATING OWNERSHIP OR USER RIGHTS; (V) IN ORGANIZING IMPORTATION AND SETTING UP MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE; (VI) FOR ADAPTATION WITHIN EXISTING USES OR TO NEW USES (I.E., LATERAL TRANSFER); AND (VII) FINALLY

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IN DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FORMS OF TECHNOLOGY. THUS, THE PROBLEM OF STRENGTHENING DOMESTIC TECHNOLOGICAL CAPABILITIES EXTENDS WELL BEYOND COMPETENT STAFF AND EFFICIENT MACHINERY FOR REGULATING INFLOWS AND NEGOTIATING THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF OWNERSHIP OR USER RIGHTS. IT MUST INCLUDE CHOICE OF TECHNOLOGY IN A MUCH WIDER SENSE THAN ECONOMISTS ARE IN THE HABIT OF DESCRIBING IT.

6. OUR PRESENT PREOCCUPATION IN THE AREA OF TRANSFER IS WITH COSTS AND RESTRICTIVE CLAUSES. IMPORTANT AS THESE ARE I HAVE SUGGESTED THAT CAPABILITIES IN DEFINITION OF NEEDS IN TECHNOLOGICAL TERMS, CHOICE, INSTALLATION, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT MAY BE MORE

IMPORTANT. IN ANY CASE, FOR AFRICA THE PREOCCUPATION WITH PATENTS MAY BE OVERDONE IN TERMS OF THE TYPE OF EQUIPMENT THAT THE REGION NEEDS IN VERY LARGE QUANTITIES AND IN WHICH ONLY ONE OR TWO COMPONENTS ARE GENUINELY SUBJECT TO PROPRIETARY RIGHTS AND THEREFORE TO ROYALTY PAYMENTS OR RESTRICTIVE CLAUSES. WHAT IS REQUIRED HERE IS CAPABILITY TO STRIP DOWN EQUIPMENT AND IDENTIFY UNCLASSIFIED

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FOR NEGOTIATION ONLY THOSE PARTS AND COMPONENTS REQUIRING NEGOTIATION. THE REAL BIND HERE IS NOT PATENTS--THOUGH WE SHOULD SUPPORT PRESSURES FOR THE REDUCTION OF THEIR UNDULY RESTRICTIVE CHARACTER--BUT TRADE MARKS, THE STRENGTH OF WHICH IS LARGELY BUILT UP BY ADVERTISING AND THE JUSTIFICATION FOR WHICH IS OFTEN QUITE ILLUSORY.

7. WE NOW COME TO MANPOWER WHERE WE NOTE THAT, TO TAKE THE CASE OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS ARE NOT TURNING OUT PEOPLE SKILLED IN CONVERTING RAW MATERIALS INTO SEMI-FINISHED AND FINISHED PRODUCTS. A ROUGH CALCULATION FROM UNESCO'S CAUTIOUS ESTIMATES OF THE POPULATION OF SCHOOL GOING AGE AND OF ENROLLMENTS IN 1972 AND 1985 (ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT 1960-1972 TRENDS PERSIST) INDICATES THAT THE REGION MAY, BY 1985, HAVE ADDED WELL OVER 100 MILLIONS TO THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ABOVE 17 YEARS IN 1972 WHO NEVER ATTENDED SCHOOL. AT THE MIDDLE LEVEL WE ARE CONCERNED WITH THE QUESTION OF HOW THE SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATE CAN BE PROVIDED WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO ACQUIRE THE SPECIALIZATIONS SO BADLY NEEDED IN SUCH LARGE NUMBERS (NOW AND IN THE FUTURE) AND FOR WHICH THE REGION IS TODAY SPENDING SUCH SUMS IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE. MOST OF THE LATE DEVELOPERS AMONG THE PRESENT-DAY INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES MET PART OF THE MANPOWER PROBLEM BY DELIBERATE PROGRAMMES OF SENDING LARGE NUMBERS OF THEIR PEOPLE ABROAD FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SPECIALIZED AREAS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND FOLLOWED THIS UP WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF WHAT HAS COME TO BE DESCRIBED AS "CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE" AT HOME.

8. LET ME TURN BRIEFLY TO THE IMPACT OF THE STRUCTURE OF DEMAND ON THE PATTERN OF PRODUCTION AND TO THE ROLE OF TRANSNATIONALS IN TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT. WE COME UP FIRST WITH THE PROBLEM OF STANDARDIZATION FOR WHICH ECA UNCLASSIFIED

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HAS SET UP THE AFRICAN REGIONAL STANDARDIZATION ORGANIZATION. I AM NOT SURE THAT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACTIVI-

TIES THIS INSTITUTION IS DESIGNED TO GUIDE, PROMOTE AND SUSTAIN IS AS FULLY UNDERSTOOD AS WE WOULD LIKE. I AM EVEN LESS SURE THAT THE CONSEQUENCES FOR STANDARDIZATION OF BULK PURCHASING AND SUPPLIES WHICH THE ECA IS ALSO TRYING TO PROMOTE, IS FULLY GRASPED.

9. THE EXTENSION OF THE CONTROL OF TRANSNATIONALS FROM ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY TO THE VAST POTENTIAL AREA OF WHAT IS NOW CALLED APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY, TECHNOLOGY FOR BASIC NEEDS, TECHNOLOGY FOR THE MASSES NOW SEEMS TO BE UNDER WAY. YET THIS IS THE PRINCIPAL AREA WITHIN WHICH LIES ANY HOPE OF DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT ACTION AND ESTABLISHING INITIAL SELF-CONFIDENCE REQUIRED FOR WIDELY-BASED RESEARCH, INVENTION AND INNOVATION. IT IS HERE THAT MY ANXIETY LIES BECAUSE I FEAR WE UNDERRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT IN GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS, TO SOME EXTENT, IN ACADEMIC CIRCLES. I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT A RAPID CHANGE OF ATTITUDES AND POLICY IS REQUIRED. END QUOTE.

10. ABOVE FROM USDEL. MATTHEWS

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